DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 154 856 JC 780 262

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TITLE Course Plan for Women's Health.
PUB DATE 8 May 78
NOTE 15p.; Graduate paper, University of Arizona

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Colleges; *Course Content; Course Objectives; Course Organization; Curriculum Guides; Evening Classes; *Females; *Health Education; *Junior Colleges; Program Design; *Womens Studies

ABSTRACT

In view of women's misconceptions about their bodies, their sexuality, their mental health, and the health care system, this three-credit evening community college course on women's health needs and concerns was designed. Course objectives include recording and analyzing the effects of nutrition, sleep, exercise, and stress on various body functions; identifying illness risk factors; developing a personal health maintenance plan; discussing the changes relative to both the reproductive and later years of life; presenting an informed consumer rights position according to health care system responsibilities; and identifying, evaluating, and selecting local health resources and alternatives to traditional care. Course activities include class lectures, discussions, and hand-outs, films, panels and guest speakers, practical health maintenance exercises, role playing, reading assignments, and a term paper. Also included is a course calendar, with the topic for each meeting and the corresponding reading assignment, divided into four units: getting to know yourself, basic health maintenance, celebrating the life cycle, and you and the health care system. Development of unit topics is discussed in terms of objectives, teaching aids and strategies, student activities, and class assignments. A sample final exam is appended. (TE)

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ED154856

COURSE PLAN

for

WOMEN'S HEALTH

by

Linda A. Whitaker

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JC 780 262

HED #321

Dr. Raymond Schultz

May 8, 1978

Introduction

Women are the mainstay of family and community health. To a large degree a woman determines the what, where, when, and who of the health care she or her family receives. Not surprisingly, womankind is little prepared for this role as arbiter of health. Most women lack adequate knowledge about their own bodies and often trust the media for information about health, food, and drugs. Judith Carey's pioneering efforts in assessing health needs of community college students leave little doubt about the misconceptions women have about their bodies, their sexuality, their mental health, and the health care system.

In view of the apparent need for such information, I have designed a three-credit evening community college course dealing with the health needs and concerns of women. It is hoped that this course will appeal to women of all ages by providing a multidisciplinary and experiential approach to health maintenance, to the physical and emotional changes during the life cycle, and to the health care system itself.

Course Rationale & Course Description

This is an evening course intended for women students at the community college who wish to examine the health needs and concerns of women. Students participating in this course will attempt to identify their present and future health needs so that they may be better able to decide how, where, and when to use the health care system. There are no prerequisites for this course. Pre-professional students and those in the Allied Health Sciences may take this course as a substitute for Introduction to Health (HCA 154).

HCA 155 (3) A multidisciplinary and experimental approach to health maintenance, the physical and emotional changes during the life cycle, and the health care system as these pertain to women in our society.

Course Objectives

Upon successfully completing this course, a woman will be able to:

1. Record and analyze some of the effects that nutrition, sleep, exercise, and stress have on various body functions.
2. Identify factors which place her at risk for certain illnesses.
3. Develop a personal plan for health maintenance.
4. Identify and discuss the physical and emotional changes and related issues of the reproductive years.
6. Identify and discuss changes encountered during the later years of life.
7. Present an informed position on consumer rights and responsibilities in the health care system.
8. Identify, evaluate, and select local health resources and various alternatives to traditional health care.

Course Activities

In order to accomplish the course objectives, the following activities will be employed:

1. Class lectures, discussions, and hand-outs.
2. Films.
3. Panels and guest speakers.

4. Practical exercises in health maintenance.

5. Role playing.

6. Reading assignments from the text and various materials on reserve in the library.

7. Term paper exploring one aspect of women's health.

Course Calendar

The course schedule is based on actual dates for the fall semester of 1978. Class will meet every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. The basic text is Our Bodies, Ourselves which can be purchased at the bookstore for $4.95. According to Fry's readability graph, this book requires a reading level of grade 12 (average number of sentences per 100 words = 3.6 and average number of syllables per 100 words = 158) which Dave Harris finds acceptable for the community college student.

Unit I Getting to Know Yourself

August 29 Film "Absence of Health - Why?" (16 minutes)
What is health?
Regular body rhythms and messages
Why it is hard to get to know yourself
assignment: pp. 1-23 from text
pp. 119-142 from The Well Body Book (on reserve)

31 Rest-work cycles
Body awareness
Charts for body rhythms
Changes in body functions as they relate to sleep, stress, etc.
assignment: pp. 55-66 in The Well Body Book
Also read "Rhythms, Cycles, and Periods in Health and Disease" by Franklin Dubois, MD pp. 114-118; begin recording in Rhythm charts

Sept. 5 Food, eating
Nutrition
Guest speaker on health foods
assignment: pp. 99-119 from text
pp. 72-86 in The Well Body Book

7 Dieting - facts and fads
Vitamins

Unit II Basic Health Maintenance

12 Exercise
Stress and relaxation - methods of relaxation
assignment: pp. 98-119 in The Well Body Book

14 Concept of Preventive Medicine
Film "Self-Health" (about 20 minutes)
Why important and why needed now

19 Mental Health - fact and fancy
Drug use and abuse
Coping with stress
assignment: Chapters 23 "Insomnia, tension, and Anxiety" and 25 "Psychotherapeutic Drugs" in The Medicine Show 1974 (on reserve)

21 Guest speaker Dr. Allan Beigel, Director of Southern Arizona Mental Health Center
"When and How to Use the Health Care Center System for Emotional Problems"
Discussion

26 Health Screening
Health Hazard Test - a self-appraisal
Health Warning Signals - a discussion of risk factors
assignment: pp. 120-123 in text

28 Films "The Self Breast Examination" and "The Pelvic Exam" (20 minutes) - pamphlets on both topics
Developing a health maintenance program
Completing the "Health Story"
Assignment: pp. 123-135 in text

Unit III Celebrating the Life Cycle

Oct. 3 Sexuality: facts, myths, values
Film "Physiology of Sexually Stimulated Female in Laboratory"
Guest speakers Dr. Lana Holstein and Dr. David Taylor on "Human Sexual Response"
assignment: pp. 123-135 in text

5 Masturbation, celibacy, hetero and homosexuality
Guest speaker Jan Madison, sex educator and therapist from the Thomas-Davis Clinic, on "Sex Therapy"
Discussion

Oct. 7 The Reproductive Years
Hormones, the menstrual cycle, pre-menstrual tension
assignment: pp. 25-37 and pp. 135-151 in text
Hand in body rhythm charts and program for health maintenance as well as "Health Story"

10 Common health problems during the reproductive years
Birth control
Abortion
assignment: pp. 167-247 in text; hand back body rhythm charts, "Health Story" and health maintenance program

17 VD, pelvic infections, vaginitis, bladder infections

19 Midterm

21 Motherhood, parenting, marriage
Panel on "Lifestyles" representing non-parents, single, and married persons
assignment: exerpts from The Growth and Development of Mothers by Angela McBride and The Future of Motherhood by Jessie Bernard (on reserve)

24 Physical and emotional changes during pregnancy, labor, and delivery
assignment: pp. 251-296 in text

26 After the baby is born
Breast feeding
Birth Options
assignment: pp. 297-326 in text; "Crisis of the Fourth Trimester" (on reserve)

31 Physical and emotional changes during the middle years - use of cosmetic surgery and beauty aids
Film "Menopause" (10 minutes)
Emotional tasks of the middle years
assignment: pp. 327-336 in text
"Adult Life Stages: Growth Toward Self-Tolerance" by Roger Gould (on reserve)

Nov. 7 Common health problems of the middle years
Heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure

9 Film "The Aging Process" (22 minutes)
Special problems of the later years
assignment: The Woman Destroyed" by Simone de Beauvoir (on reserve)

14 Guest speaker Maggie Kuhn, president of Gray Panthers on "What We Can Do to Make Aging Easier"
Discussion on coping skills and aging

Unit IV You and the Health Care System

Nov. 21 The Health Care System
How it works
Who does what and why - read pp. 337-371 in text

Nov. 23 Thanksgiving recess

30 Assertive behavior in the health care system
Film "Assertive Training for Women Part II"

Dec. 5 Guest speaker from campus counseling center on "Assertive Behavior"
role playing; term paper due

7 Health care options "Holistic Health"
Local resources, clinics, HMO's

12 Women as consumers of health care
Consumer rights and responsibilities
Women as providers and arbiters of health
Course evaluation

18 Final exam given 7:30 - 9:30 PM
Term papers handed back

Total scheduled class meetings = 28.

Periods devoted to examinations = 1.

Holidays or other classes to be missed = 1.

Net number of class sessions for instruction = 27.

Development of Unit Topic

Unit Topic: Health Screening, Health Hazards, Risks and Warning Signals

Unit Objectives

Upon completing this unit, a student will be able to:

1. Identify methods of health screening.
2. Identify the common, correctable health hazards of women and risks associated with them.
3. Explain how these hazards are correctable.
4. Analyze her own health hazards.
5. Explain significance of various health warning signals.

Teaching Aids:

Blackboard, chalk
Overhead projector
Transparencies on "Common Correctable Health Hazards in Women"
"Health Warning Signals", "Health Risks"
Health Hazard Appraisal Test

Teaching Stragies:

1. Introduce concept of health screening.

   on blackboard, write definition of health screening - "a tool used to guide the health provider and health consumer in planning medical treatment or preventative measures for illness"

2. Techniques of health screening.
   Question: What are some of the techniques that you are familiar with for health screening?
   Responses should include: routine physical exams, dental check-ups, self-breast exams, pap smears, etc.
   Introduce concept of Health Hazard Appraisal Test (to be distributed after discussion of health hazards)

3. Some common health hazards of women (those that are correctable by personal action)
   Use transparency (taken from Ellen Switzer's "Preventive Medicine Guide: How to be Healthy at Any Age")
   Question: Why do you think these hazards might be correctable?
   Question: What are some ways we can correct them?

Question: Can you think of more hazards that we can control?
Put responses on blackboard.

Student Activity:

4. Take the hazard test. Allow about 15-20 minutes. Remind them this is for their own knowledge. No grade will be given on "test".

Student Activity:

5. Question: What have you discovered about the health hazards in your own life?
Use blackboard to record some of the hazards found; relate these to a total picture of women's health by introducing "Risk Factors"

Teaching Strategy:

6. a. Use transparency on risk factors as they relate to health hazards
Transparency would include:

Hazard	Risk
Accidents, Motor Vehicles	drinking, medicine and drug usage of self and drivers you travel with, miles travelled in a year, use of seat belt
Heart Disease	high blood pressure, lack of exercise, obesity, diabetes, smoking, family history
High Blood Pressure	obesity, smoking, family history
Cancer	
Breast	family history, never pregnant or few pregnancies, early menstruation or late menopause
Cervix	first intercourse at early age, multiple sexual partners, multiple pregnancies
Uterus	few or no children, late menopause, diabetes, high blood pressure

Hazard	Risk
Colon, Rectum	low fiber diet, rectal polyps, ulcerative colon
Lung	smoking one pack a day for 20 years or more, pollution, family history
Liver disease	alcoholism, drug abuse
Suicide	depression, family history

6. Important to discuss risks, not in terms of absolutes, but in their relative importance.

   c. Often a discussion of these risks elicit some highly emotional responses. Remember, when someone asks, "What do you mean that many pregnancies increase the risks of cervical cancer or that it's related to intercourse?" she may be asking "Am I at risk for cervical cancer?

   d. Due to limited time, encourage students to see instructor after class to help interpret results of Hazard Appraisal Test; also to help ascertain relative risks of these factors to their own health.

7. Use transparency on warning signals as they pertain to the above risks and hazards (taken from Dr. Nina Woodside's "A Woman's Guide to Her Own Health Warning Signals"

   a. Important to relate these signals to appropriate action to be initiated by the woman.

   b. Avoid diagnosing various symptoms students may have or have had; any bothersome symptoms should be discussed after class, not during class - this assures the student of privacy and individualized attention and assessment of the problem.

Class Assignment:

Identify ways of minimizing health risks in your own life.

These will be needed in devising your own health maintenance program which will be covered in the next class period.

Read pp. 120-135 in text.

SAMPLE FINAL

Directions: Read each part of the test carefully. You will have ample time to complete it. Please write your name on the back of the last page of the test.

PART I True or False. 10 points.

1. Premenstrual tension is a scientific fact. T_____F_____
2. Homosexuality is a psychological disorder. T_____F_____
3. The leading cause of death of white women ages 40-74 is breast cancer. T_____F_____
4. The leading cause of death of black women ages 40-74 is heart disease. T_____F_____
5. Arizona and New Mexico have the highest VD rate in the nation. T_____F_____
6. Arizona has the highest suicide rate in the nation. T_____F_____
7. Most breast lumps are cancerous. T_____F_____
8. Pregnancy is most likely to occur between days 10-16 of the menstrual cycle. T_____F_____
9. Women taking the Pill also need to take vitamins. T_____F_____
10. All VD is curable. T_____F_____

PART II. Definitions. 10 points

1. What is health?

2. What does the term preventive medicine mean?

3. Define holistic health.

4. What is assertive behavior?

5. What does the word menopause really mean?

Part III Fill in the blanks. 15 points

1. The most popular form of contraception in the U.S. is _____.

2. _____ and _____ are the two most commonly abused (legal) drugs in the U.S.

3. _____ is the most common emotional problem among American women.

4. _____ is the most curable of all cancers but over _____ women in this country die each year because it's detected too late.

5. The _____ hormone occurs in the early part of the menstrual cycle and the _____ occurs in the last part of the cycle.

6. The best age for parenthood is between _____ and _____

7. _____, _____, and lack of _____ have been identified as the leading factors contributing to heart disease.

8. The one mineral women in their reproductive years do not get enough of is _____.

9. The most common of the "silent diseases" of the middle years is _____.

PART IV Short Essay. Answer each question as briefly as possible. 65 points

1. List 5 methods of contraception and their relative risks and benefits (10 points).

2. A. What are the three major venereal diseases?

   B. List two symptoms of each of these diseases. (8 points)

3. List five factors that affect health. (5 points)

4. List five things we can do to prevent or minimize serious illnesses. (5 points)

5. There are some basic rights and responsibilities of the consumer of health care. What are they? (10 points)

6. I am a woman who has some income (not a lot) and no health insurance. Where can I go in Tucson for help with: (list at least two for each) (10 points)

   A. Birth Control

   B. Prenatal Care

   C. Family problems or emotional problems

   D. VD

   E. Drug abuse

7. List four emotional tasks of pregnancy. (5 points)

8. A woman complains to you that her last visit to the doctor or clinic was confusing and generally unsatisfactory. You reply by teaching her five assertive techniques that she could use on her next visit. (5 points) List those five techniques.

9. There are four phases of sexual arousal in women. What are they? (5 points)

10. What are the basic principals of wt. reduction? (7 points)

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BONUS QUESTIONS Choose one only (10 points extra)

1. Discuss some of the problems of the aging and what we can do to minimize them.

2. How do women function as providers and arbiters of health in our society?

Course Grade

A student's course grade will be determined by:

Total Points

A = 280 - 300 (more are possible)
B = 260 - 279
C = 240 - 259

1. MIDTERM 100 points possible

   A = 90 - 100
   B = 80 - 89
   C = 70 - 79

2. FINAL 100 points possible

   A = 90 - 100
   B = 80 - 89
   C = 70 - 79

3. TERM PAPER 100 points possible

   A = 90 - 100
   B = 80 - 89
   C = 70 - 79

4. HEALTH STORY 10 Incentive Points (based on completeness)

   HEALTH MAINTENANCE PROGRAM 20 Incentive Points (based on demonstrated knowledge and application of principles of health maintenance)

   BODY RHYTHM CHARTS 10 Incentive Points (based on quality of observations)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JUL 7 1978

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